FREEDOM

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

When the Armistice was signed in 1918 someone we know remarked that he could never get a thrill out of life again. He had no prevision of the future, of course, for the news of today makes one marvel at the world we live in.

It has been said that man's most remarkable accomplishment is to make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before. The U. S. Senate has just passed a bill giving Roosevelt the power to make two dollars out of the same quantity of gold as is now used for one, and another authorizing him to accept 32 cents worth of silver for 50 cents worth of war debts. How come, Cagliostro!

General Dawes, one-time Vice President of the U. S., denounces a deputation of Chicago's school teachers demanding $23,000,000 in salary many months in arrears as "trouble makers," and Otto H. Kahn praises the capitalist system because "it has done more for human progress than any other." The infamous Judge Thayer who, after calling Sacco and Vanzetti "anarchist bastards" and sentencing them to death, ruled on his own decision and pronounced himself unprejudiced six or seven times, has passed through the pearly gates of heaven or the fiery gates of hell—at any rate gone and left the capitalist system flat. Ramsay MacDonald, Socialist apostate, has managed to tear himself away from his God-appointed task of saving Britain and the gold standard long enough to come here for a few days to "talk things over with Roosevelt," and after having brought tears to the eyes of some of the hard-boiled newspaper men at Washington has departed again for England, an escort of 150 policemen accompanying him from his hotel to the boat. Just to help out he brought with him his wise young daughter who once said her father was her profession, and who gave birth to the following pearl of wisdom: "A depression if not too protracted is a good thing, for it brings out the grit in people." How does she know? Well, when we lost our belief in hell we lost a great consolation.

"Six hundred Iowa farmers abduct judge from court, beat him and put rope around his neck" because he refused to swear he would sign no more mortgage foreclosures. The Judge didn't suffer very much except for the loss of his dignity and memory, for, although he has been on the district bench for many years, he has been unable to recognize any of those who seized him. The Governor called out 250 National Guardsmen and declared martial law in the district, remarking, incidentally, that the men who attacked the Judge were not farmers but gangsters—which is one way of exonerating the farmers. If the farmers keep on putting ropes around people's necks one of these days some over-zealous individual will pull too hard and then . . . well, what then?

Irving Fisher, economist of Yale, writing in the *Times* on May 1st, says apropos of the money situation:

". . . The farmer's dollar has swollen even more than 75 per cent.

"No wonder he can't pay his mortgages. That is why he now defies the law and the judge. He knows that his plight is not his own fault."

If the same principle be applied to the 13 to 15 million unemployed industrial workers—and why not?—the worthy professor will logically be compelled to justify disregard for law and even acts of violence committed by workers reduced to the brink of starvation *through no fault of their own.* Monopolizing land, the means of life, transportation and the medium of exchange is all of a piece, for it forces the producers of wealth to pay tribute to a class which so far as it can prohibits production and distribution except on its own terms. As long as this is done it is idle to talk of freedom or even of democracy; i.e., if we understand democracy?

James Truslow Adams the historian says we are the most lawless nation in the world, and along comes Dr. Frederick B. Hoffman, statistician, to prove it. His survey on the subject appears in *The Spectator,* an insurance periodical. Basing his conclusions on reports from 180 cities of the United States, Dr. Hoffman has found that the rate of 10.8 deaths by homicide per 100,000 population in 1932 did not vary from that of 1931. Figures for the five years beginning with 1927 and ending with 1931 show that 51,206 persons in the country met death by homicide in that time. "Murder more than ever is becoming an ingenious art, if not a trade, in the country," writes the good doctor. In contrast to the record of the United States he points out that the rate for 1931 in England and Wales was 0.5 per 100,000. In other words, more than twenty times as high a murder rate in the United States as in England and Wales. Birmingham in the State of Alabama, where they are trying to murder the Scottsboro boys for the crime of being black, tops the list with 54.9 as against New York of the "Jew money" with only 8.3 per cent. That is, a rate nearly seven times as high. Even Chicago with its Capone gangsters has only 14.1 per cent as against Atlanta, Ga., with 49.5; Jacksonville, Fla., 48.5; Memphis, Tenn., 52.2; Little Rock, Ark., 40.4; Macon, Ga., 44.5; and Montgomery, again in the State of Alabama, with 42.8. This of course does not include the thousands of men and women who have committed suicide because of starvation, cold and humiliation due to the monopoly of land and the means of life by the ruling class. Find what comfort you can in these figures. To us they represent tragedy.

* * *

Italy under the murderous dictatorship of Mussolini expects a deficit of $153,000,000 for the fiscal year July 1, 1933, to June 30, 1934, about $76,000,000 more in taxes than was estimated for the year. Multiply 153,000,000 by 19 and you have the number of lire; then tell us if the trains run on time. The foregoing figures are officially admitted by Finance Minister Guido Jung. What they would be if impartial auditors went over the books one hesitates to think. According to reliable authorities wages in Italy are, in terms of real purchasing power, the lowest in Europe after those of Portugal. A measure of the situation can be had by comparing it with that in France, where with easily five times the wealth the deficit for the year is estimated at $165,866,600 (4,178,000,000 francs). Pretty terrible for France but ghastly for Italy—and still we are fed on stories of Mussolini's saving the nation from Bolshevism and reinvigorating the country by his marvelous capacity for organization.

* * *

When people become disgusted with the dissension in the revolutionary and radical movements and the denunciations of one group by another instead of unity of action against the common enemy, the capitalist class, it is not unusual to hear them say that if we are ever to have Socialism it will be the capitalists who will inaugurate it. This theory is based upon the supposition that the capitalists are as intelligent as they claim to be—a grotesque idea. The lack of intelligence displayed by Chicago and other cities during the past year or so in dealing with that bulwark of the present system, the public school, is a case in point. When teachers are starved, clothed in rags, treated worse than cattle by members of the ruling class, a blind man can see that it must inevitably result in their expressing radical views and conveying such views to their pupils, the men and women of tomorrow. The teaching profession has lost at least $100,000,000 in salaries during the past year, and if plans now under way are carried through it will mean another $200,000,000 this year. Here is a group that has never organized more than a fraction of its members beginning to awaken and talk in revolutionary terms merely because the "intelligent" capitalists like Dawes reduce them to hunger, cold, rags and humiliation, and then call them "trouble makers" when they ask for the wages they have earned. One can sympathize, and we sincerely do, with every effort to relieve the suffering of men by finding a peaceful solution to the problems that capitalism and government create, but one fact sticks out always—that the ruling class has never given way an inch until forced to do so. Remembering this, talk of the capitalists' bringing about socialism is childish nonsense.

* * *

For many years prior to the war the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists made many bitter accusations against the "great" Socialist movement of Germany, accusations now proved to have been just. Amongst others was that of masquerading as Socialists when they were merely reformers, a fact admitted by the thousands of revisionists in the movement who were led by Bernstein. In this country we were accused when we said these things of slandering the Socialists, for it was considered good propaganda to pretend that the country which dominated every Socialist Congress prior to the war was really what the name implied. On the editorial page of *The New York Times,* May 3, 1933, under the heading "Topics of the Times," appears the following:

"German Internal Unity.

"Herr Hitler said in his May 1 speech that the day would remain a national holiday if only because it marked the end of internal class war. The next day the headquarters of 6,000,000 German trade unionists were raided by the Brown Shirts, and control of the German labor movement was rescued from the hands of the 'Marxian riffraff.'

"The outside world is earnestly invited to ponder this thought of a reunited, consolidated, coordinated German nation dwelling in brotherly accord. And the proof of this beautiful internal unity is

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GOVERNMENT vs. ADMINISTRATION

By JOHN TURNER

My attention was arrested by the paragraph in Dr. Michael Cohn's article in the March issue of FREEDOM on "Why A Government?" in which he said, "I am afraid that men like Holmes very often confuse the idea of government with that of administration."

Let us make no mistake about it, thousands of thoughtful and sincere people besides John Haynes Holmes are equally confused. This confusion is largely responsible for the slow progress of our Anarchist ideas. Admitted that the constant and deliberate misrepresentation of Anarchism by a venal press hinders its principles from being understood —as recently when it was cabled from the U.S.A., that Zangara, *the Anarchist* had been executed— but it is the misconception in the minds of so many as to the function of government which enables government to continue as it does.

As an indication of this confusion: one of the best organizations in this country, from a trade union point of view, the "National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives," describes its head office on its literature and rule books as "The Seat of Government." Just imagine the effect this false description has upon the minds of tens of thousands of its members! But it confirms to the full Dr. Michael Cohn's contention as to the confusion regarding the idea of government. Before any serious headway can be made by the Anarchist movement this false conception has got to be cleared up.

After all, what is government? Is it not "that person, or body of persons, who control the executive forces of a country, to enforce the law?" And what is law? Statute law has well been defined as "the written expression of the desires and wishes of the predominant section in society at any period."

So the function of government stands revealed as the enforcement of the desires and wishes of the predominant section of society. A century ago in Great Britain it was the aristocracy, today it is the commercial classes. The former was and the latter is a comparatively small minority of the adult population, yet they have been predominant despite that. Their influence has been out of all proportion to their numbers, and statute law, in the main, expresses their desires and wishes. Already it is clear that the function of government is not quite what it is popularly thought to be.

The theory of government as usually propounded is that "it protects the weak against the strong." But it is evident that the practice is, and must be, in the main, to neglect the weak and make the strong still stronger. But here comes the confusion: the masses of the workpeople have clamored for some relief from their poverty, some security, however slight, against the precariousness of their livelihood. And government after government, of every political color, knowing the effect in advance, has granted bit by bit the so-called "social service"; Old Age Pensions; Health Insurance and Unemployment Benefit Subsidies; Free Elementary Education, and Road Grants to Local Authorities. These things and many more have been and are administered by State officials whatever the government in power.

The masses of the workpeople do not stop to go deeply into the operation of the function of government. They *feel all the time* the effect of the *administration* of these "social services" on their lives and are apt to bless every government that goes "one better" in this direction. They do not realize that the exploitation of labor is maintained by the subtle legal process of passing on to the exploiters the results of their work, creating unearned incomes for the owners of capital: or that the real function of government is to protect those who secure these incomes without work by *enforcing* the law when necessary. Neither do they grasp the fact that the government wants, and does everything it can to create, successful exploiters. It is easy to tax these to keep the Navy and Army going, to pay interest on the National Debt, etc. The "social services" and their *administration*, are but trifles in the Budget by comparison. They are like throwing a few scraps back to the workpeople from whom not only the whole of the taxes paid by the exploiters, but the huge masses of wealth left behind in their hands, has originally come. The possessing class has all along realized that the confusion in the minds of the masses created by administering the "social services" through State governmental agencies is their great security.

It was Lloyd George who truly said that "the small contribution paid by the government toward unemployment was a very low insurance premium against revolution." As a result of thus mingling administration with government masses of people believe it *is* administration and management, and do not understand its purely coercive function of enforcing the law.

Then too, while the mass of the workpeople do not understand the legal artifices by which they are exploited, or the way in which such a large proportion of the wealth they produce is passed on and secured to those who do not work for it, they do welcome any little relief secured by the passing of labor laws of various kinds. And not realizing in the least that the real function of government is to enforce the law—that is, the desires and wishes of the predominant class who try to maintain the social and industrial system of today, which by legal process gives them the wealth produced by others—the workpeople are grateful to any government which administers such legislation. They do not know that a wise conqueror refrains from driving those he has conquered to despair; and that government likewise, as the artful agent of the predominant section of society, shrinks from proceeding to such extremes as would kill the goose which lays the golden egg.

It is for the Anarchists to disentangle the false ideas held regarding governments and their function, to show that the administration of all that is useful and advantageous in society could be carried out more economically and far better if there were no governments controlling the executive forces (the Army and Navy) to enforce the law.

Dr. Cohn is right; it is the confusion of the idea of government with that of administration which holds back so many people from openly joining our movement. It is for us to separate the idea of coercive power from that of general administration and economic management to show the injury to social life resulting from the former, and the advantage from the latter where the opportunity to test, by "free trial and error," should bring us to the most useful plan by experience.

We are certainly living in momentous times, when tremendous events follow quickly on each other's heels. A violent and narrow nationalism has emerged from the war and its after-effects. But behind it, in the background, are silent though irresistible forces struggling toward an international understanding on the part of the common people, a unity which will be possible only when territorial coercive governments have been replaced by universal cooperative administration. It is to try and make these ideas clear to our fellows that the Anarchist movement must work with all its might.

The Class Struggle

By JOE SWIRE

I wish to state at the outset my disagreement with the conventional—and it is that—understanding of the phrase "the class struggle." Marxians among both Socialists and Communists use the phrase to imply the existence, or anticipated existence, of two hostile armies conscious of opposing interests and ends who will soon grapple in decisive battle, victory going to the Army of the Proletariat. Preliminary skirmishes between members of these armies are understood to have already taken place since the emergence of these differentiated classes from a hitherto homogeneous society.

None will deny that the masses of workers in particular industry or service feel, and rightly, that they are being exploited by managers and owners although there are times in the history of industry or during wars when employers compete with one another for labor and so boost wages, nor will anyone deny that in times of emergency, when danger of a workers' movement threatens, employers get together to combat the "Red Menace." But that even in times of crisis or revolution the workers are conscious of their class and of the necessity of united opposition to the employers is not so evident.

The duty of a Socialist or revolutionary movement is to make all the exploited and deprived under the present system conscious that it is specifically from the capitalist system that their sufferings flow. It is equally the duty of that movement to evaluate anew the meaning of the class struggle so as to avoid indulgence in wish-fulfillment thinking. For the use of the phrase "the class struggle" without sufficient explanation to imply that the workers and their best interests will reign supreme once the power of the capitalists is broken is not among the least of the faults of conventional Marxism.

I plead for an understanding of the struggle between worker and employer based on a more individualistic psychology than that of class or group interpretation. The struggle of one group of capitalists against another, as in our Civil War or as in the immediate past between the productive and financial capitalists, indicates that they have not a broad common understanding but that they too have individual and ofttimes conflicting interests.

The pliability of the American Federation of Labor, whose members organize the workers, the unfortunate opposition between skilled and unskilled labor, and the large number of workers and lower-class unemployed in the ranks of the American Legion and other Fascist organizations—such as those in Germany, Austria, Italy, etc.—sufficiently point the inaccuracy of a rigid class-war interpretation of social phenomena.

The Russian scene, where so-called representatives of the proletariat are dictatorially entrenched and castigate all who disagree, despite the justice of criticism in view of the present collective farm difficulties and in view of the enforced militarization of labor against that same labor's will, also indicates that the working class is not a class in the strict sense of the word.

I believe a correct understanding of the phrase "the class struggle" would take account of the individualistic angle presented here and would admit that in times of crisis and revolution those with similar interests tend to cooperate to defeat their opponents, but that when the danger has passed cooperation gives way to conflict between different groups in the victorious class. Note bourgeois periods of domination and Bolshevik revolutions.

Is Soviet Russia a Success?

By MICHAEL COHN

If not, why not?

First of all, let us define the word success in this connection. Does success spell plenty of bread and the other bare necessities of life? If man does not live by bread alone what are the other things on which he lives? If those things are freedom, liberty, independence, the opportunity to express oneself and to live one's own life, does Soviet Russia spell success?

It was Herbert Spencer who defined liberty to mean a "man's will independent of any one else's will," and slavery to mean "one's will depending on the will of another," be it that of another individual; a large group, as in an oligarchy; a majority, as in a democracy; or an entire nation, if that is thinkable. Spencer, therefore, spoke of the materialization of social democracy or state socialism as the "coming tyranny."

We Anarchists have always claimed that in a social-democratic state the government, centralizing and concentrating in its hands all the functions and powers of the people, politically, economically and socially, must inevitably become a tyranny.

Russia has demonstrated that beyond peradventure. Bolshevism laughs you to a standstill if you mention the word liberty. You are looked down upon with scorn and contempt for using a word which represents nothing but a bourgeois conception. There is no vestige of freedom of speech, press, assembly or other sort of expression in Russia.

Russia has been compared to a pyramid—at the bottom of which are the rank and file of the people, the peasants, industrial workers; on top of them the soldiers and sailors; a little higher up, the Communist Party; above them, the Commissars and the whole bureaucratic officialdom; above these the heads of departments; then the Central Executive Committee with the all-powerful Cheka, or G.P.U., as it is now called; and at the very peak, reigning supreme over all the other strata of the pyramid, the almighty Stalin.

If ever there was absolute power centered in the hands of one individual, that individual is Stalin. He may wish to consult some members of the Central Executive Committee, but his word is always final. His opinion must never be contradicted or questioned. Anyone who differs from him in any way at all is doomed, he may be kidnaped in the dead of night and shot against the wall, sent to Solovetzky Islands or Siberia, thrown into jail, or deported from the country without anyone's being the wiser for it. No trial or hearing is necessary. The administrative process is used far more extensively now than it ever was during the régime of the Tsars.

[In effect this may be so, but while Stalin may dominate the Central Executive Committee, he is actually the secretary of that body, and they must share the responsibility for his actions. H. K.]

I asked a friend of mine who had just returned from Russia whether he had visited a prison there, and if so, how was he impressed? He answered with great indignation that there is no such thing as a prison in Russia. I then asked him whether that was because all Russia is a prison, and there cannot possibly be a prison within a prison.

Of course, my assumption at the beginning of this article that Russia has a plenitude of life's material necessities is entirely hypothetical. There is not enough food or any other necessity in Russia and there has never been enough since the October Revolution. However, admitting for the sake of argument that at some future time after the second, third or fourth Five-Year Plan, famine, want and destitution will be done away with, will Sovietism, or, more correctly, Bolshevism, deserve to be called a success?

Only recently a million members were thrown out of the Communist Party, together with a great number of the most important heads and executives of departments. A million men and women—33% of the entire Communist Party — carefully and most strictly selected from amongst all the millions of the Russian proletariat, are now summarily ousted as unfit. All of them had charges, more or less serious, brought against them of inefficiency, disloyalty —all the way up to sabotage—treason, counter-revolutionaryism. All these men and women, thrown in the discard as so much rubbish, will naturally not feel very sympathetically inclined towards that system of government. There will be very little loyalty and devotion to the cause left in them. If anything, it will breed resentment, venom and hatred in their hearts. These periodic purgings and cleansings show that there must be something radically rotten in the State of Denmark, not only among the scores of millions of moujiks, but also in the very topmost ranks of the Communist Party itself.

Russia is a house divided against itself, and, as always, must inevitably fall. No structure based on a foundation of force and violence can possibly endure for any length of time. Forced collectivization, mobilization of armies of men and women to the most distant provinces, forced labor in the Kolkhozy and Sovkhozy, in the mills and mines, in the fields and factories, punitive expeditions, grain requisitions, driving out of whole villages, Draconic laws and decrees, general conscription, the passport system recently inaugurated, death penalty for the least breach, wholesale condemnations—surely no state can exist under such violent, cruel and drastic conditions.

The whole social fabric of the Russian dictatorship seems to be wabbly, even as is the fabric of the entire Western civilization. Espionage has gone mad. Suspiciousness, distrust, enemies without—the whole wide world; enemies within—white guards, mensheviks, social-revolutionists, syndicalists, anarchists, and all the millions who fail to agree one hundred percent with the holy *Torah* in its totality.

An opinion likely to challenge Karl Marx, Lenin, Dzherzinsky, Stalin, any or all of the sacred scriptures of Bolshevism is contraband, taboo.

Spiridonova, Babushka, Trotsky, Chernov, Zinoviev, Rykoff, Tomsky, Eismont and thousands of other idealists and martyrs of the old Russian fortresses—traitors and bandits all.

No less than a million Russian intellectuals have been exterminated by the Russian Bolsheviki in the last fifteen years. Unions, cooperatives are a joke in that glorious, revolutionary country. The Commissar rules over them all with an iron hand, as he rules over the technicians, engineers and other "spetzy."

A parliament in a burgeois institution. The first and only constituent assembly was dispersed with bayonets.

When Lenin went to extremes in his policy of coercion and violence against the people he was man enough to admit his grievous errors and adopt a new economic policy. Stalin, admitting his stupendous blunders, instead of relaxing, decides to tighten the stranglehold upon the throats of the 125 million Russian peasants. What is the result? They refuse to sow or plant: no crops, no harvest, famine, discontent. Horses and cattle are slaughtered by the million. There is a general soldiering on the job. Millions of people are on the move continuously from village to city and back again, from one province to another, looking for bread, for a roof over their heads and a garment to cover their half-naked, shivering bodies. The Russians have become a race of wild, primitive nomads. Will the martyrdom of the Russian people never end?

My friend, the hot-headed Bolshevik whom I mentioned at the beginning, admitted that in the cities millions of people live crowded together in vermin-infested, dilapidated quarters, often as many as ten adults or several families in one room; roaches, bedbugs, fleas, flies, lice actually covering the walls; but folks don't seem to mind it, he said. "The Russians are proverbially sociable and would be lost if they had more space to live in."

Believe it or not.

However, I must not end these lines without emphasizing the fact that there is not one scintilla of doubt in my mind as to the purity of motive on the part of the Kremlin. Neither Lenin nor Stalin nor any other head of the Soviet Government could possibly be accused of or charged with self-aggrandizement, cupidity or greed. Their ambition is not wealth. What they are after is power, glory. They are fanatics to the *n*th degree. They are suffering from a fixed idea that the world can be made better by force, violence or coercion, and that centralization and concentration of all social functions in the hands of a few will bring real happiness to mankind. They are anxious to show that they can beat the world industrially. Hence their mad rush to build up the biggest "stroys" and power plants. They aim to produce tractors and machines of all sorts in untold numbers, with the result that their structures are slovenly and shoddily put together. They are going at too fast a tempo, and nothing good ever comes out of that. Their factories are poorly equipped. They lack material, system, skilled and trained hands.

In a word, Russia is not ripe for a real industrial revolution. Force and coercion will not help; neither will the importation of mechanics, technicians, engineers from foreign lands. Russia is not rich enough for that.

There seems to be a consensus of opinion on the part of all fair-minded people who have returned from Russia that the Five-Year-Plan is a failure; that the flimsy structures which have been erected are not at all durable. They go to pieces before they are actually finished. There is also general agreement as to the fact that the cries of the masses for bread and the bare necessities of life reach to the heavens; that their physical agonies and mental anguish are beyond all human endurance.

It seems that the cheapest commodity in Soviet Russia today is man. The machine has become the mighty Phtha worshiped above all gods. *Ex deus machinae.* Size, bulk, quantity, numbers at the expense of quality and human individuality.

The Bolsheviks and Anarchists are thus at two diametrically opposite poles and can never meet. We are traveling in opposite directions.

It is remarkable that even Henry Ford in his interview in the New York *Times* of today (February 1, 1933) has finally reached the conclusion that we are coming to smaller units of production, that the large centers are doomed, that the farmer will not only till the soil but also produce industrially, and that we need improvement in our economic sense as well as in our mechanical sense. He sees the dawning of a new age with the breaking up of our great conglomerations of people.

Is it not strange that two such extremes as Kropotkin and Ford can meet on common ground, the first as a theoretician and the second from actual experience?

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A Call to Action!

Comrades and Fellow Workers:

By degrees the web of centralized authority is being woven ever tighter, closer, stronger, more complete. By degrees too what exists of the splendid solidarity of the Working Class is being turned into submissive obedience to bureaucratic orders. This is slowly taking effect in all countries not already in the grip of dictatorship.

While the so-called revolutionists of America are entertaining themselves raising funds to buy justice with defence in enemy territory courts—a defeatists program—or otherwise carrying on worthless, ridiculous and even injurious demonstrations before the common enemy—the political state—the authoritarians are taking advantage of this inertia and apathy by solidifying their forces for the most formidable despotism yet seen.

Unless the intelligent idealists warn the American Working Class of what the future holds in store for the whole of society, and unless we come to an understanding amongst ourselves as sincere revolutionists, we will be forced into the following tyrranical enslavement: no freedom, no inspirations, no self assertion, no initiative, no incentive, no mutual-aid, no courtesy, no solidarity, no peace, no progress, no happiness, not even a decent human life; for we will be piloted as robots from the laboratories of bureauocrats, under centralized vigilance administrations, operated by a brutal and ruthless political despotism combined with a "scientific" economic exploitation of humanity through state and governmental oligarchies.

The shadow of this fatal strategy and these coming outrages can be traced back to the Marxian dogmatism. An attempt has been made and is still being made to apply the antiquated formulas of 1848 to combatting the modern form of the state and to the theory of the workers organizations, so-called rank and file organizations, modeled after the state—that is to say, all highly centralized. The old formula is altogether unfit to meet the needs of the working class of America, with its advanced industrial development, and they have had too many unfortunate experiences in being victimized by means of it. They must not be misled again by this talk of "industrial democracy," "rule from the bottom up" and so forth. So long as there exists a top and a bottom in the unions there cannot be industrial democracy. Democratic centralism in organization is, at best, but a subterfuge of conscience-stricken would-be dictators, and is wholly impossible; an attempt at it leads but to factional disputes, oppositional minorities, disruption of solidarity and discontinuity of working class activity.

American workers, even the most conservative, detest political action, especially so in unions; they hold a suspicious attitude toward all politicians. Organization on a group autonomous basis combining the workers into free federations on a local and free industrial union principle is the ideal for this country.

The theorists' revolutionary industrial movement here is wholly influenced by union parliamentarians, radical politicians, nationalistic opportunists and reformist elements, due primarily to aligning itself with the Marxian political reform doctrines. They ultimately assume a narrow sort of political partisan policy, while the tenets of education and information are in the control of and under the authority of sophisticated Marxian apostles.

The existing unions advocating the emancipation of the working class, must build the frame work for the revolutionary society by adopting a broad and flexible trend that would be acceptable to a world movement, such as propagated by the World Syndicalist Movement. But innumerable attempts to take the isolated unions out of stagnating circumstances by affiliating them with the International Workmans Association has failed. In bringing up such proposals at meetings, conferences or conventions of the Workers Unions this matter was always ignored or set-aside; while at the same time a barrage of misleading information would be spread, causing a skeptical attitude and unwarranted fear in the minds of all concerned against such International Solidarity.

All workers in the U. S. who clearly understand the principles of the International Working Mens Association are favorable toward such affiliation. Furthermore there are thousands of intelligent and practical workers, both in and out of the present unions, who would enthusiastically receive an American Section in unbroken solidarity with their Fellow Workers in other countries. But the advanced revolutionary workers and idealists find it impossible to get any of the unions here to declare such magnificent and profound solidarity. And yet the oppression in Russia, Italy, Germany and nearby Latin-American countries uncompromisingly demands the solidarity of the Workers in America. Surmounting all this fatalism, there is no organization here today that definitely declares solidarity with the Revolutionary Syndicalists of Spain, who are on the road to building the frame-work for the new society—*before the real revolution.* This is a most serious indictment, which must be dealt with immediately.

Without an American Section of the I.W.M.A., the revolutionary unions here will become nothing more than propaganda agencies in the interest of the all-crushing monster—political state dictatorship. Reasoning this coming danger, and desiring to stimulate interest and activity to prepare ourselves as workers against such chaotic catastrophe, a committee has been formed to propagate the need for International Solidarity with the Revolutionary Syndicalists of the World, by deed as well as by word.

What is most urgently needed here, and at once, is an assimulated effort to bring about a more complete decentralized form of industrial unionism with a direct connection with the working class of other countries. But owing to the many obstacles and difficulties with which we are confronted, we intend for the present only to establish a local group, functioning on a local basis, broadening in scope as necessary to realities.

We propose to expound the idea of affiliation by printing and circulating information dealing with aims and tactics, telling wherein it best suits local conditions as we find them, and to carry on exposures of all centralists tendencies and their inevitable disasterous results to the Working Class.

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The Theatre

By M. Jagendorf

What Price Reform

. .. . Not that there is much in a single outcry against a horrible wrong yet continuous howling anger by a sufficient number of human beings in the cause of any betterment in life is bound to bring results—sometimes. So there is a hopeful note in the ebb and tide recurrent sharp outcries, on the stage, against the barbarity of our penal institution.

This time it is "Little Ol' Boy" by Albert Bein, a tragic and horrible story of the life led by boys in a mid-western reformatory. In the crowd is one who "does not belong," Robert Locket, and he is befriended by another boy, Red Barry, who committed the awful crime of slipping a revolver to his brother who was in the death house. The two youngsters stick together against bullying inmates and against bullying officers. They escape and Robert dies, but Red Barry is brought back and sent to the "Big House" where his brother was "burnt."

A pleasant edifying story such as is probably happening right now in most institutions run as intelligently. No,—this story is only a pale example of reality,—according to my companion at the play who worked in these places and who told me that the conditions depicted in the play do not come within a mile of reality! The unadorned unexpurgated stories of these institutions cannot be shown on the stage! Very often boys in such institutions are developed into morons, degenerates and criminals—if they have not the good fortune to die.

As a play "Little Ol' Boy" is gripping and finely acted, particularly the part of Red Barry played by Burgess Meredith. It is a play worth seeing but it will probably never reach those who could mend matters. They will continue to weep crocodile tears at the sad situation and shut their eyes to the graft and corruption that bring about such conditions.

White Jade

In the arts, in the finer sciences, there are unique, radiant creatures who stand out as the inspiration and the impetus leading the human spirit on the way to beauty, happiness and perfection. These true leaders are followed by endless lesser personalities completing that which sometimes is only begun. It is like the sun giving life to endless growths. Such masters may create but a single idea, but it is of such spiritual value, containing within it a living force that it is parent to endless other creations.

That kind of a master is RUTH ST. DENIS in the art of the dance. "White Jade," one of her dances, is to me the manifestations of an attainment so perfect and so beautiful that no word save cosmic force will describe it.

It is a simple dance—a series of poses, the artist clad in a white flowing robe, against a background suggesting China. In these simple and soft motions there is the expression of her unique art, the symbol of her force, her personality and her influence. Spiritually and artistically it is the precious achievement of her gift to the world. It is the great contribution in her particular realm of beauty and contains within it that perfection which is so complete that it becomes a creating force. It is the highest peak of her personality and art.

In her recent recitals at the Mansfield Theatre there were many other numbers besides "White Jade," and all had a breath of the loveliness that is wholly her own. The recitals were a rare entertainment for those who desire in the dance beauty rather than sensationalism. There is no other dancer like Ruth St. Denis in our country today.

I CAN NOT KEEP QUIET!

AN APPEAL

When in 1908 the Czarist government executed some four hundred revolutionists, my father, Leo Tolstoi, exclaimed with a groan: "I can not keep quiet!" And the Russian people at once responded in unison to his appeal, protesting against such wholesale murder.

But now when in the northern Caucasus a horrible bloody slaughter is going on, when thousands of people are shot down and more thousands—men, women and children—are exiled to northern Siberia, and my father is no longer among the living, I feel that I must raise my feeble voice against such villainous barbarity, the more so because I have worked with the Bolsheviki government for twelve years and have witnessed such terror developing.

The world remained quiet. Millions were banished, died in prisons and concentration camps in northern Russia. Thousands have been shot on the spot. The Bolsheviki started with their class enemies: the religious, priests, scientists, professors, and now it is the workers and the peasants. And again the world remains silent.

For fifteen years the Russian people have been suffering hunger and cold. They are robbed; their bread and other products of their own labor are taken away and exported to other countries, to acquire money, not only for machines, but also for world propaganda. And when the peasants protest against such robberies and hide their bread for their starving families, they are either shot or banished to Siberia.

The Russian people can not endure such suffering any longer. Here and there rebellions burst out. Thousands are now fleeing from the Ukraine, where they are threatened with death from starvation, leaving house and goods behind them.

And what does the Soviet government do? It is issuing decrees, banishing hundreds of thousands (from Moscow alone one-third of its population), shooting thousands, and thus trying to establish tranquility. Cossacks were recently shot down and 45,000 men, women and children were banished, by the decree of Stalin, to Siberia, where certain death awaits them.*

Is it possible that the outside world will keep quiet any longer? Is it possible that the different nations will continue to trade with these murderers, and thus corrupt their own governments? Is the League of Nations calmly going to discuss the peace of the world with the representatives of a power which shows nothing but a bloody terror in its regime? Are the writers, the idealists such as Romain Rolland—who so penetratingly delves into the souls of two of the greatest pacifists of the present times, Ghandi and Tolstoi—and others such as Henri Barbusse, and Bernard Shaw, are they going to continue to glorify the socialistic paradise? Do they not know that they are making themselves morally responsible for the spread of this plague of Bolshevism, which is threatening the world with destruction and perdition? Do the people still believe that the dictatorship of a group of men who are aiming to destroy culture, religion and morality is called *Socialism?*

Who is again to utter the cry: "I can not keep quiet?" Where are the champions of truth, love, and the brotherhood of mankind? Where are the Christians, the true socialists, pacifists, writers, the social workers? Why are you quiet? Do you need any more convincing proof, any more evidence or witnesses? Do you not hear the cries for help? Or do you perhaps think that the people in Russia can be made happy by violence, murder, and being deprived of freedom?

In my appeal I am not addressing myself to those whose sympathy for Bolshevism has been bought with money which was robbed from the Russian people. I appeal to those who still believe in the brotherhood and equality of mankind; to religious people, and to true socialists, to writers, to public and political workers, and to the wives and mothers! Open your eyes! Join us in our protest against the tormentors of 160,000,000 defenseless people!

Newton Square, Pa. Alexandra L. Tolstoi

* * *

Lincoln, Calif., April 24, 1933

My dear Kelly:

Received your letter of the 18th this morning. . . .

Now as to the statement of Alexandra [Tolstoi] that one-third of Moscow's population was banished during the passport upheaval I should have commented upon it, I admit, for I read the same report in the Russian and German radical press. It did not mean that one-third of the people were banished to the North to penal servitude, but that they had to leave the city because they either did not have the money to pay for a passport or else they could not prove their identity. The Russian press claims that the move was simply a move to relieve the city of a food shortage, also of the responsibility of feeding those who had no passports, for the latter were immediately deprived of their food cards. Besides, this wholesale expulsion made no ripple in Moscow, for the people from the outside came in faster than those without passports could leave; in fact the government is not yet through with this matter, although it has been going on for months.

Of course I agree with you that we should be very careful in making statements that we cannot substantiate. On the other hand it is most difficult to get news from Russia which is not in favor of the Bolshevik government. I know, and I suppose you know, that no correspondent can stay there any length of time if he would report the true condition of affairs, but it is a soft job if the correspondent praises the achievements and industry and keeps more or less mum as to the condition of the people. The fact is there have never existed such terror and universal starvation since Ivan the Terrible.

I have still many boyhood friends and distant relatives there and have direct communication with them, but even they are afraid to tell the truth, and when they do so always beg me not to mention their names and will not sign such letters. Only a few weeks ago ——— wrote us that her husband was sick and that if we could not send them some American money they would all soon die of starvation. The Mennonites all over the world are collecting thousands and thousands of dollars to keep their brothers in Russia from starving to death—and still there seems no relief. At present the Mennonites are negotiating with the Canadian government for ships in which to send wheat and flour, as money is giving out.

You remember that the American government sent a commission to Russia to investigate as to whether there was forced labor in the Northern lumber camps or not, and reported that there was not. But the commission did not discover that as soon as the government learned that such a commission was coming thousands and thousands of these prisoners were driven far into the timber through deep snow, and when the Americans arrived everything was O. K.

The fact is that the G.P.U. have a contract with the government to deliver the lumber for so much a thousand feet—and you can imagine the rest.

I know of no case during the 150 years of the Mennonites in Russia under the old regime where a single one of them was ever in prison, while at present there are about 20,000 in these logging camps, their only crime being the possession of a horse and two cows, or else their refusal to join the collectivity, for which they were called Kulaks. In short, the more "criminals" the G.P.U. can find the greater the profits in the lumber business.

Even Stalin in his last speech admitted that the people were suffering and would continue to suffer for a year or two more, but assured them that after that they would be in paradise, exactly what he promised when the five-year plan was started. Yet today the people in the Ukraine live on pumpkins and are making bread of dried potato peelings.

It makes me wild when liberal writers in the *Nation* or *New Republic* console themselves with the remark that "the people in Russia are better off than under the old regime, anyhow." The fact is that the people as a whole never suffered such starvation as they are suffering today.

Signed: A. Isaak

"Let us protest against the tormentors of 160,000,000 defenseless people." This is incorrect, for the rulers and members of the Bolshevist party are not tormented at all. L. R.

Comrade Isaak sent on to us some time ago the appeal of Alexandra Tolstoi referred to above, but some of the statements seemed so incredible that we wrote him for confirmation, pointing out that we are as anxious as anyone to publish the truth about Russia, but that exaggeration and misstatements get us nowhere. He tells us that the article appeared in a Russian Anarchist daily paper published in Chicago and was translated by himself. It also appeared in *The Congregationalist*, a religious publication of Boston.

For the benefit of the younger generation of our readers—Our comrade A. Isaak was one of the group that published *Firebrand* nearly forty years ago and was later for many years editor and publisher of *Free Society*. An Anarchist for more than forty years—Comment by us is unnecessary.

H. K.

*Since the above appeal was written 20,000 people have been banished from the Ukraine.—The translator.

A General Strike or a General Lockout?

By W. I. FRUIT

We who have received our education in that great fighting organization, the I.W.W., have always believed that the death throes of Capitalism and the birth pangs of the Industrial Democracy would come through a general strike. Is it not possible that we have underestimated the intensity of the machine process of employment displacement? Is it not possible that the crisis will come through a general lockout rather than a general strike? Already there are more workers locked out than it was ever possible to bring out on strike at one time.

If the change is to come about by means of a general lockout then our problem is to organize the workers who are off the job and prepare them for the part they are to play in the final struggle. Already the various cooperative barter groups, especially the Unemployed Cooperative Relief Association, are laying the foundation for such a movement. If these groups can only be brought to see the inevitability of a change from the old economic system to the new they will become a rallying point around which the whole working class can be coordinated into a co-operative system of society.

Anarcho-Syndicalism and the General Strike

By ONOFRE DALLAS

(An Answer and a Review)

The I.W.W. has issued a very interesting pamphlet entitled *The General Strike,* which appeared previously as a series of editorials in *The Industrial Worker* of Chicago.

In connection with the subject of European syndicalism discussed in that pamphlet, I wrote an article which appeared in FREEDOM of January 16th in which I pointed out that some of the differences mentioned in one of the editorials as existing between the I.W.W. and European syndicalism did not really exist, and showed facts to prove it. Now Ralph Chaplin, the author of the pamphlet, answers me in a long article, stating that I am wrong, and attempting to prove it by saying that *after all I am not a member of the working class and it is only natural that as a non-proletarian theoretician I am perhaps too prone to confuse matters of theory with matters of fact.*

Any impartial reader will admit that such argument is irrelevant. If what I said is wrong it will be wrong whether I am a proletarian or not. If my statements are sound they will remain sound whether I am a pauper or a millionaire. Ralph Chaplin did not have to devote so much space to defending the I.W.W. from attacks that were never made. I did not discuss the merits or demerits of either the I.W.W. or the C.N.T. of Spain, nor did I imply that Chaplin had said anything disparaging to the Spanish organization. I simply said that *the structure and aims of anarcho-syndicalism and those of the I.W.W. are similar in so far as they are both fighting organisms for the present-day struggle and serve as the basis of the new society both as regards production and administration.* By the way, I happen to be just as much a member of the working class as Chaplin himself. I am sure that my income is not higher than his, that I don't live better than he does and that I mingle with proletarians as much as he does. The only difference is that he gets a salary every week and I have to get a dollar here and fifty cents there to make up an average weekly income which I am sure is much lower than his—and the paid jobs of the I.W.W. are notorious for their meager remuneration. Furthermore, I happen to have the same ideas and the same method of reasoning as when I worked in a factory and was recording secretary of an I.W.W. local. Moreover, my ideas as to unions and organization, and my social vision are those of nearly a million and a half Spanish workers—all members of the working class, affiliated with the C.N.T. In short, my opinions on labor organization and the future society happen to be those of one of the most advanced and powerful proletarian labor organizations in the world.

When I read the editorial that prompted this answer I did not know that it was part of a series to appear later in pamphlet form. When I read the pamphlet I discovered wherein the I.W.W. concept of the General Strike differs from that of the anarcho-syndicalists, one of the points which I mentioned. The pamphlet clears up the matter, as it says that there are four phases to the General Strike:

1. A General Strike in a community
2. A General Strike in an industry
3. A General Strike throughout a nation
4. A Revolutionary or Class Strike—THE General Strike.

As far as the first three phases go there is no quarrel. As for the fourth, it is a misnomer, for it is not a strike at all, but the seizure of the factories, etc., and the operation of industry by the workers for themselves, without the bosses. To quote: "According to the modern idea of the General Strike it would not be at all necessary, during a well organized class movement of this sort, for the employed workers to leave their assigned places in industry at all. On the contrary, the effort would be made to get workers into industries instead of out of them in order to keep the wheels of production going. The General Strike, in other words, would be a means of feeding rather than starving the people." In other words, *say I,* the General Strike would not be a *general strike* but a *general expropriation.*

Let us now discuss the merits of that Expropriating General Strike as proposed in the pamphlet under review. Since 1912 I have followed quite closely the development of the I.W.W. I was at one time recording secretary of an I.W.W. local, assistant editor of the local organ, and later, in Chicago, for years cooperated very closely with the editor of a foreign language organ of the I.W.W. I have translated two constitutions of the I.W.W., several pamphlets, as well as a great number of articles, and I may say that I have read practically everything worth while published by the I.W.W., but this is the first intimation I have had of the I.W.W.'s having such a conception of the General Strike. It certainly is not the conception of its founders, nor of the men who went into Mexico to fight for Land and Liberty, nor of those radicals of all sorts who at one time or another agitated in the I.W.W. and made it a great and militant labor organization. It must be a new idea that gradually evolved in the minds of certain leaders and has now been worked out into a concrete conception and offered as such to the working class of America. I don't mean by this that the I. W. W. should adhere to old conceptions if they have been found wanting; that would be a very unprogressive attitude.

Anyway, there is the idea and apparently the I.W.W. accepts this conception of the General Strike for industrial freedom. The important thing now is to see whether such an idea will work or not. I think for the most part that it will not work. I realize that it is cruel to waste human lives, especially workers' lives, and believe that if by taking over industry in a strikeless strike the overthrow of capitalism may be accomplished, so much the better. But can any revolutionist expect for a moment that the capitalists will let the workers take over the factories without a struggle, without playing their last card and selling their privileges and their lives dearly?

I presume that Ralph Chaplin realizes that such a General Strike must be supported by the immense majority of the working class in order to be effective and successful. He must make provision for that in the phrase "a well organized movement." But has a general strike been made at any time without the use of compulsion and violence on a certain proportion of the workers, and wouldn't that be even truer of expropriation? Doesn't Chaplin realize that there are a great many workers who would go on a general strike for better conditions but would refuse to join an expropriating strike? Does he think that the Greens of the American Federation of Labor and the Largo Caballeros of Spain would follow his expropriating experiment? Violence will have to be used on the scissor-bills and the union scabs, for they will side with the master class; there will be clashes, and the soldiery and the bourgeoisie, fully armed, will mercilessly massacre the rebels unless they leave their shops and take up arms to defend themselves.

And what about the farmers? The I.W.W. has utterly ignored the farmers. I have heard some leaders express themselves in a very dogmatic and narrow fashion about the farmers, indiscriminately, whether rich or poor. If the I.W.W and other revolutionary organizations in the U. S. continue ignoring the farmers—and there are millions of them,—not only ignoring them but antagonizing them, the expropriating strikers will have those farmers on the side of the master class when the fight comes. The farmers will gladly support the ruling class and declare a "counter-strike" against the revolutionary strikers. Who would there be to prevent a body of soldiers from going into a shop or warehouse to get provisions? The workers, of course. How? Not with flowers or nice words, but with guns. And then you'll have war. No matter how you look at it, no matter what your intentions, you can not avoid war with the enemies of the working class.

The author of the pamphlet seems to take it for granted that the workers will respond one hundred per cent to the final call, but this is at variance with historical facts. Unless a certain amount of coercion is used on the scissor-bill workers, they will scab and probably counter-strike to help their masters, along with recruits from the technicians and the middle class. Anyway, the general strike for industrial freedom will not run smoothly. *Fighting is unavoidable.* The Italian workers tried a peaceful strike in 1920, but failed when confronted with the guns of the soldiers and the cutthroats of Mussolini. It may be argued that their failure was due to the fact that the factory seizures were isolated and that it was not a general nation-wide strike, or that the Socialists betrayed it, or that it was a premature move. These arguments may be correct, but how do the advocates of the new strikeless strike know that their strike will be more successful in securing a one-hundred percent response from the workers? How do they know that their move will not be as premature as any of the attempts of revolutionary workers in the past? How do they know that such organizations as the A. F. of L. or the American Legion, or some fascisti or similar organization will not step in and do or try to do what Mussolini did in Italy?

One point that should always be borne in mind is that the capitalists will fight with equal determination against Communists, Industrial Workers, Anarchists, or any other group or party that may aim at depriving them of their wealth and privileges—whether we aim at their overthrow through the capture of the State or the factories, or both.

I can not close without stating that contrary to the impression that may be given by the previous paragraphs, the book is a valuable contribution to social science. It is extremely interesting, if only for the novelty of the conception of the General Strike. In the process of building up arguments for his thesis the author gives a very clear analysis of trade unionsm, political parties and so forth, and being from the pen of Ralph Chaplin the style is clear and compelling. It is a pamphlet that will mark an epoch in the history of the revolutionary labor movement, whether or not we can agree with its conclusions; therefore every radical worker should read it. The idea of the General Strike for Industrial Freedom, although doubtless held and expounded before this by some among the I.W.W. is for the first time fully and clearly enunciated in the pamphlet here reviewed.

ON BEING PRACTICAL—

The Viewpoint of a Christian Anarchist

By AMMON A. HENNACY

Anarchist ideals are fine, but impractical, is the usual objection heard today when the Communist Five Year Plan and the onslaught of the Technocrats would presume to relegate the Anarchist to the realm of a super-dreamer.

Oscar Wilde answers this criticism very well:

"It will, of course, be said that such a scheme is quite unpractical and goes against human nature. This is perfectly true. It is unpractical, and it goes against human nature. That is why it is worthwhile carrying out, and that is why one proposes it. For what is a practical scheme? A practical scheme is either a scheme that could be carried out under existing conditions, or a scheme that is already in existence. But it is exactly the existing conditions that one objects to; and any scheme that could accept these conditions is wrong and foolish. The conditions will be done away with, and human nature will change."

I do not agree with the above statement that human nature will change. I have no more faith in the efficacy of the change of human nature from the emphasis of one form of selfishness to another than I have in the change of government from Capitalism to Fascism, Socialism or Communism.

Professor E. A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin has shown that forms of evil may change but they produce the same result:

"The modern high-power dealer of woe wears immaculate linen, carries a silk hat and a lighted cigar, sins with a calm countenance and a serene soul, leagues or months from the evil he causes. Upon his gentlemanly presence the eventual blood and tears do not obtrude themselves. . . . The purveyor of spurious life preservers need not be a Cain. The owner of rotten tenement houses, whose 'pull' enables him to ignore the orders of the health department, foredooms babies, it is true, but for all that he is no Herod [and] when the catastrophe does come, the sinner salves his conscience by blasphemously calling it an 'accident' or 'an Act of God'."

If the Anarchist believes that left to himself without coercive laws man would solve the problems of greed, jealousy, war, etc., he must necessarily base his argument on something more stable than human nature, which is full of selfishness; our philosophy must be founded upon something positive and not alone on the negative viewpoint that "all laws are wrong."

Radicals and reformers have sought to modify, obstruct, or transform this human nature through contracts, laws, and religions based on fear. The master class has used these baser elements of human nature to remain in power—by giving out part of their spoils in return for those who defend the system of spoilation.

Any philosophy based on concepts of mistrust, fear, hatred, greed, and selfishness in general will win over those not so effective in using these concepts, but it can certainly not have anything but a temporary ascendency, and is not worth while the attention of those who seek to build for a permanent solution of the world's problems.

The question then arises how can an ideal be reached while still depending upon erring human nature to reform itself? Has it done so in the past? Has this "fighting the devil with fire" done anything except produce more evil and disaster? Obviously if the Anarchist will not use coercive measures politically in order to achieve success, and has no faith in them, he must not use the equally illogical method of reliance on trying to reform human nature from without. There then remains but one method, that of the individual seeking to reflect as much of the divine as possible. The bridge which will take us from this old human nature to the new divine nature was shown to us by Jesus, who had enough human nature to drive the money changers out of the temple, but enough of the Christ or divine nature to give us the sermon on the mount. The old love of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is replaced by the law of love and the command to resist not evil by evil but to overcome it by good.

Victor Hugo tells of Jean Valjean whose thief's nature could not be changed by one more jail sentence or one more beating by the police, but the Christ spirit which animated the priest who forgave and shielded him for stealing the golden candle sticks changed him to one in whom the divine nature became predominant. So today, as in all time, the most hardened criminal, the most greedy capitalist, or the most coercive tyrant is but the victim of his own belief in the efficacy of his destructive methods. Can we Anarchists hope by using the same methods to be free of the same results of *slavery* to human nature instead of the *freedom* of the "Sons of God"?

Many of the worst oppressors of labor are not the hereditary rich, but the upstarts who have just left the ranks; such as John L. Lewis and Matthew Woll. Is there any reason to believe that if the workers were given power, or if the coercive power of the capitalist were reversed that this same greedy human nature would not assert itself in a new form of tyranny?

The Anarchist has made the mistake of the average radical in following the atheistic and materialistic viewpoints of Marx and Bakunin, who naturally enough and with reason opposed all religion as "opium for the people." The Communists have been realistic enough to adapt the theory of Marx to their present problems, and while it is not a success from our point of view, it at least shows some results. What message does the Anarchist bring towards solving these issues?

If we use the same tactics as the Communists why expect different results?

Those who seek to reform human nature through fear of a hell or purgatory, of police or prison either make hypocrites or clever crooks. Jesus did not teach such doctrine, but as it is easier to live off the labor of others, to temporize with evil and try to serve both God and Mammon than to solve economic problems, this has been the history of organized religion. The churches are the chief ones to keep outsiders from investigating the Sermon on the Mount, as it is seldom discussed in church.

The question then arises: How can we of this western world, immersed in capitalistic, economic and financial chaos, ever hope to approach this message of Jesus and apply it to our problems in a practical way?

To a world hardly recovered from the last war and preparing for the next one the practical thing to do is to disarm entirely and renounce imperialism and foreign investments.

In a world where prisons are full and where crime increases daily the practical thing to do is to cease filling prisons with men who are for the most part kept idle and surrounded by the ignorant henchmen of politicians. Why not set them free in the mountains in colonies where they can develop freely, and treat the ones who are mentally sick in institutions where they should be surrounded with love and helpfulness instead of punishment and fear?

In a world whose slums and congested cities breed crime and degeneracy the practical thing to do is to follow the suggestions of Ralph Borsodi and Stuart Chase and decentralize industry; tear down the slums and take culture and amusement to the poor tenant farmer, and the freedom and joy of a hard day's work in the open to the nervous wreck bred by the city.

In a world where the children are taught in church and school to "obey the law of the land" and to follow "my country right or wrong"; where Boy Scouts and military training camps flourish; and where our Congress, having allowed the youth by the hundred thousand to drift into vagrancy, has the insolence now to herd them into military camps under the guise of "protecting" them and building their characters, the practical thing to do is to refuse to send our children to these institutions, to form schools of our own or to teach them at home.

Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them . . . where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." The churches do not believe in God, or they would trust Him and not rely on the vanity of numbers. Nothing multiplied by ten million is still nothing. The very essence of Jesus' teaching is love and brotherhood, yet all churches support war, nationalism and economic injustice. If they encouraged their followers to think instead of blindly to obey the church and the state we might expect progress. Sincere Christians will continue to "come out and be separate" and cease to rely upon the comfort of the companionship of numberless mediocrity.

Those semi-anarchistic religious groups like the Doukhobors and the International Bible Students—whose leaders were in Atlanta for opposition to the last war—who look upon themselves as ambassadors from God in this wicked world and therefore take no part in voting and do not support war are to be praised for their courage although they may not desire to cooperate with those who are economic radicals also. But those religious groups that pretend to be *spiritual* and that actually uphold *material tyranny*, and ignore or refuse to support groups which oppose the present system are the worst possible enemies of spiritual progress.

Coming again to the everyday practical viewpoint, how should one who accepts the Christian Anarchist view differ in his daily activities from others? In times of peace when the issue is not too clearly drawn it is difficult to dramatize and bring it to the attention of many people. We can refuse to be so entangled in material possessions and capitalist ideology as to find it difficult to take the idealistic stand in a crisis. If we do not believe in the war system we may actively support some such absolutist group as the War Resisters' International, of which Einstein is chairman in the U. S., refuse to work on war materials, or to buy Liberty Bonds. If we believe that one man is incapable of judging others and condemning them to prison we should refuse to serve on juries or to vote to elect members of a court or other officials. If we know that our educational system kills the spirit of freedom in our children and encourages selfishness, nationalism and hypocrisy we should not honor these schools by seeking to place our children in them.

If the foundation is weak the most elaborate superstructure will be useless. I am not interested in making blueprints for the exact structure of the new society; the trouble in the past has been that each one has swallowed whole the plans for a system

and then ceased to think, thus lessening any hope for the effectiveness of that system. Let us keep and cultivate the idea of growth. To the extent that the selfishness of human nature is replaced by the Divine nature our foundations for a new society will be sound and our problems will be solved in the best way possible as they arise.

Can a practical man say that the present reliance upon selfishness, war, vengeance, prohibition, etc., provides a secure foundation? Can a practical man continue to call himself a Christian and rely upon the very antithesis of the teachings of Jesus?

The Christian Anarchist calls upon all real Christians in and out of the churches to boldly apply the Sermon on the Mount; to cease to rely upon the illusion of church and state—which are based only on external values and the selfishness of human nature; to refuse to support war of any kind in any way; to seek to develop "the Kingdom of God Within" and the reflection of the Divine; to cooperate with their fellows in the building of a better economic system; and to be content with a mile traveled on the right road rather than many miles on the wrong one.

We should not be too harsh in our criticism of the masses who, sheep-like, follow the propaganda of press, school, movie and church. We cannot wake them up and get them to think for themselves en masse—their whole experience has taught them not to think, but to obey. Our duty is to keep alive our ideals at whatever cost to ourselves. Some day the masses will die of the results of their folly or have learned the lesson of independence of others. If we ourselves can pass through these trying experiences, the transition from disillusionment to disillusionment as our ranks are thinned by the loss of those who are at heart really Communists or Socialists, and who leave us for the "practical" idea of "immediate success," if we can retain our poise and our integrity throughout, we can help to show the practicability of the Sermon on the Mount: when each will do unto others as he would be done by, of his own free will, not through the fear of law. In the end what other system can be called practical?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

(*Continued from page* 1)

daily raids, imprisonments, proscriptions. Germany is united, but every day threats and warnings are launched against enough categories of malefactors to constitute one-half of the German people.

"The Weimar Record.

"Between Hitler and the conquered Marxians there is a real difference in respect to class war and national unity. The Marxians preached class war theoretically, but in practice observed national unity. Hitler preaches national unity, but in practice encourages civil war.

"The revolutionary regime which came into power after the Armistice was moderation itself; so much so that most outsiders have said it did not deserve to be called a revolution. It did not proclaim class war, but crushed by force of arms Communist efforts to let loose class war.

"The Marxians did not set up a guillotine. They did not confiscate private property. They paid indemnity to the former kings and princes. They retained the old imperial flag as the commercial flag and tolerated its use in other fields.

"The Marxians paid honor to figures of the old regime like Hindenburg and Stressmann who were willing to be friends. They waged a patriotic campaign against the French in the Ruhr. They retained the old civil service personnel. They practiced repression against no one until the Hitler movement broke forth with the avowed intention of upsetting the democratic regime by force."

The statements made here have with perhaps one exception been made over and over again by probably every Anarchist paper published in Europe and America. Only they denounced the Socialists for truckling to the enemy and violating every precept of Marxian Socialism, whereas *The Times* tries to show how much better the Marxians were than the Hitlerites. The one exception we take to these statements is to the last one, that "They practiced repression against no one until the Hitler movement broke forth with the avowed intention of upsetting the democratic regime by force."

In the winter of 1922, during which the writer spent five weeks in Berlin, a general strike of railway men and electricians took place there. The Berlin *Daily Forward* denounced the men bitterly, the officials of some of the largest Socialist unions in the country published condemnatory broadsides which were posted on Municipal billboards, and "Comrade" Ebert, President of the Socialist Republic, seized the funds of the union in violation of the law, to break the strike. Wherever one went one saw evidences of the monarchical feeling; in the Reichstag, which that despot had tried for a third of a century to destroy, stood a bust of Bismarck. From the standpoint of German history Bismarck has his place, but to have a bust of him in the institution he tried so hard to crush shows how shallow the Socialism of the Germany party really was. Now comes our old friend *The New York Times* which, while pointing out the inconsistencies of both the so-called Marxians and the Hitlerites in preaching one thing and practicing another, is all for the so-called Marxians. Why? H. K.

* * *

Berkman:

Some vandal has torn twenty pages out of the copy of *Berkman's Prison Memoirs*, belonging to the Public Library at 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, New York. It is quite important that a new copy be supplied, and if any comrade or reader of FREEDOM has one he or she wishes to donate it will be accepted with thanks.

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A CALL TO ACTION

(*Continued from page* 4)

At a later date it may be advisable to call a conference dealing with this subject, for which an agenda will be provided. Those who understand the percepts herein outlined and desire information are asked to write or notify the correspondence committee.

Revolutionary Syndicalists of the World,
Accept Our Solidarity!

Dated March 1, 1933

J. F. Campbell Julius Bohlem Carl Brundin
Frank Heekin Albert Sparks

Correspondence: Libertarian Progressive Committee, 1785 East First Street, Los Angeles, Cal.

FREEDOM GROUP

will hold a Vetcherinka and Dance
on
May 29th (Decoration Day)
at the Free Workers Center
219 Second Avenue, New York City

It is hoped that all who can, will come

BENEFIT FOR *FREEDOM*

Under Auspices of
CIRCOLO AURORA
42 Maverick Square, East Boston, Mass.
SATURDAY, MAY 20TH, 1933, AT 7:30 P.M.
All readers and comrades in and around Boston are cordially invited to attend

SINDICATO UNICO DE MINEROS DE ASTURIAS COMITE DE RELACIONES

Sama de Langreo, April 24, 1933

This Committee appeals to all rebels who feel any spirit of solidarity for their fellow workers to make their contributions toward helping 2500 metal workers of La Felguera who have been striking for six months against the combined forces of the capitalists, the Republican-Socialist government and the political and capitalist press.

We are making this call to all the workers in America and to all those who have a spark of rebel blood in their veins. La Felguera is the strongest bulwark of the C.N.T. in Asturias and perhaps in Spain, and it is for this reason that the Socialists have sworn to break this strike, subduing the strikers by hunger, defeating those whose only demand is an honorable retirement arrangement for the old workers whom the company wants to throw into the junk heap after it has sucked out all their vitality.

Fellow workers, by giving our solidarity to our fellow workers in La Felguera we shall save our organization which is threatened by the combined enemies of labor.

Long live the metal workers of La Felguera!
Long live the C.N.T.!

THE COMMITTEE

All contributions should be sent to Solano Palacio, Requejo No. 3, Mieres, Asturias, Spain, or to José María Martînez, Casa del Pueblo, Gijón, Spain.

(Seal of the Miners Syndicate of the C.N.T.)

VIRGILIA D'ANDREA

A vocal and instrumental concert will be held
on
SUNDAY, MAY 21ST, AT 8:00 P.M.
at the
Galileo Temple, 17-19 Montrose Avenue
Brooklyn, N. Y.

for the benefit of our comrade and well-known poetess, Virgilia d'Andrea, exiled from Italy by Fascism now in a hospital in a critical condition. A number of distinguished artists will participate in the concert which promises to be a real musical treat.

TICKETS: $1.00

STELTON MODERN SCHOOL

Musicale under the auspices of and for the benefit of the Modern School, Stelton, N. J. will be held at the Rand School, 7 East 15th Street, New York City, on Friday May 19, at 8:45 P. M.

Zari's Marionettes
Jenet String Quartet
The Dance Group
Marcus Perper, pianist
Bernard Friedman, baritone

ADMISSION 35¢

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

MODERN SCHOOL, STELTON, N. J.

You are cordially invited to attend the Nineteenth Annual Educational Conference of the Modern School, to be held at Stelton, on Saturday and Sunday, May 27th and 28th, 1933.

Saturday, May 27th, at 9:00 P.M.
Zari's Marionettes

Sunday, May 28th, at 10:00 A.M.
Children's Play and Assembly

12:30 P. M.
Luncheon

2:00 P. M.
Conference Session Opening Address
Report of Principal
Report of Secretary on School and Living House
Nomination of Principal